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(54) **MILLING MACHINE, IN PARTICULAR SURFACE MINER, AND METHOD FOR MINING MILLED MATERIAL OF AN OPEN CAST SURFACE**

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See application file for complete search history.

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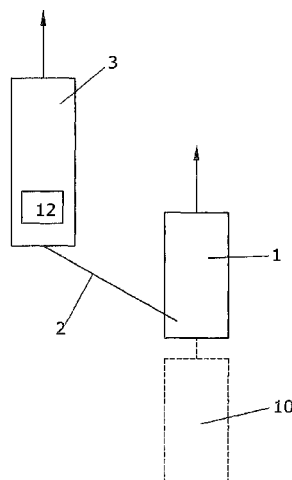
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

In a method for milling an opencast mining surface or for milling off layers of an asphalt or concrete traffic surface with a milling machine removing the ground surface, by milling the ground surface along a predetermined milling track and by transporting the milled material via a conveying device to at least one container of a truck that travels along next to the milling machine, a relative position between the container and the conveying device is automatically controlled to regulate the loading of the container.

39 Claims, 4 Drawing Sheets



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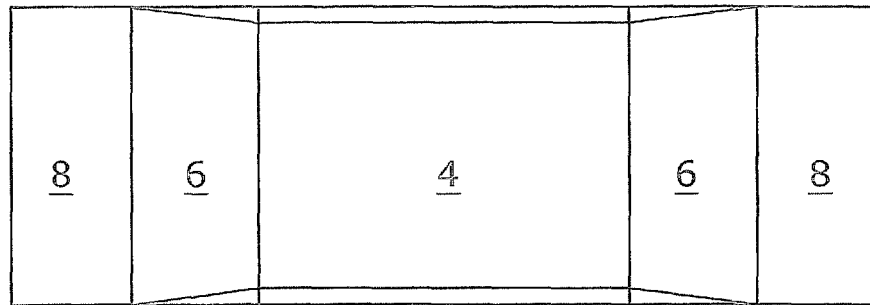


Fig.1

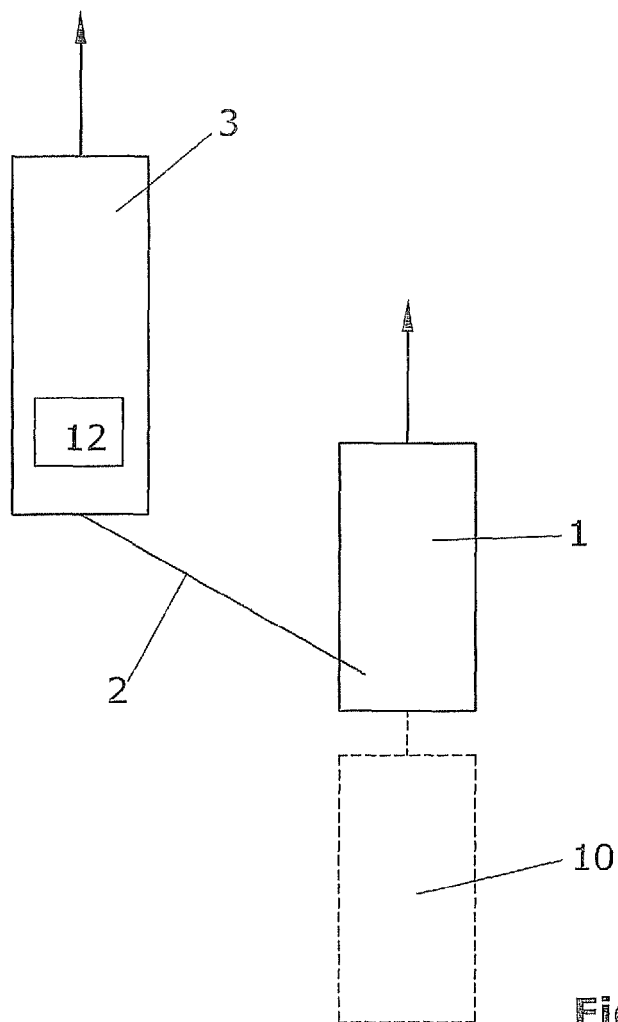


Fig.2

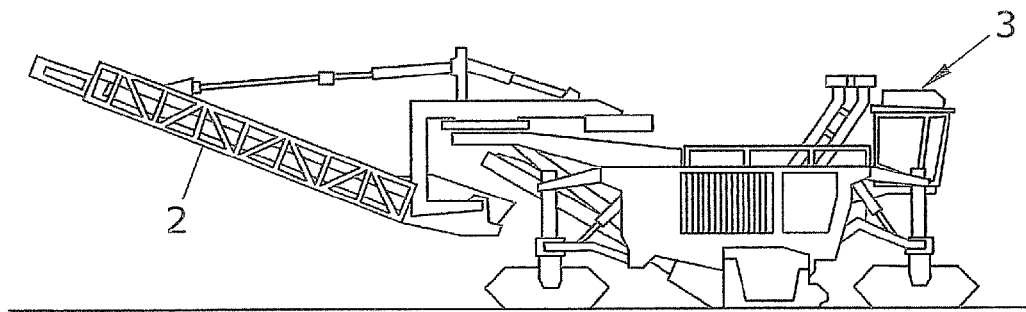


Fig.3

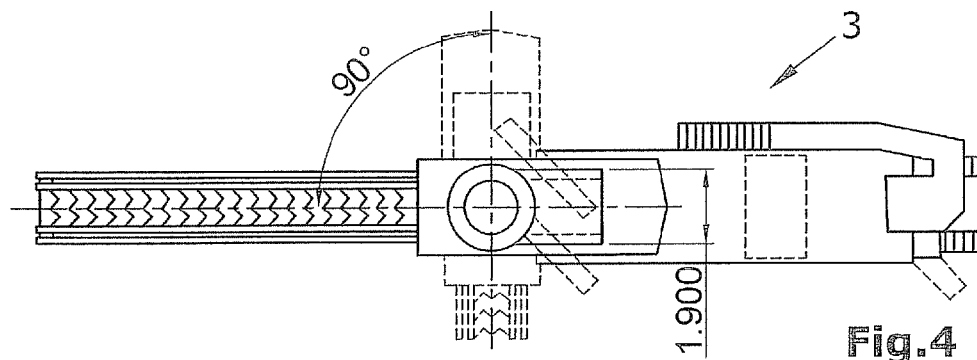


Fig.4

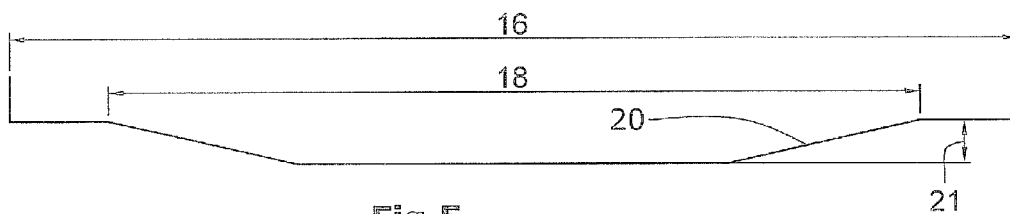


Fig. 5

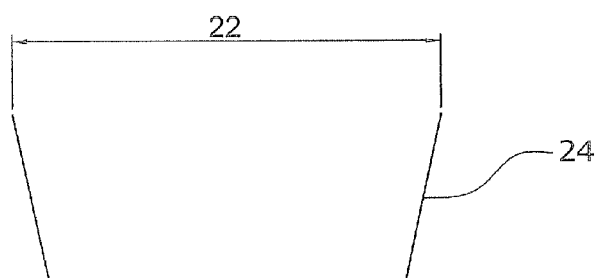


Fig. 6

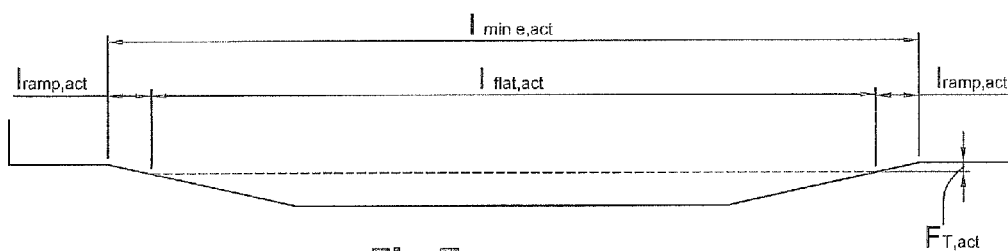


Fig. 7

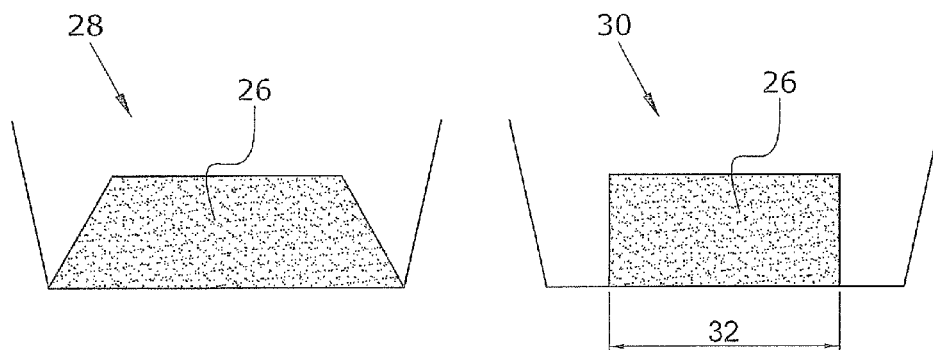


Fig. 8

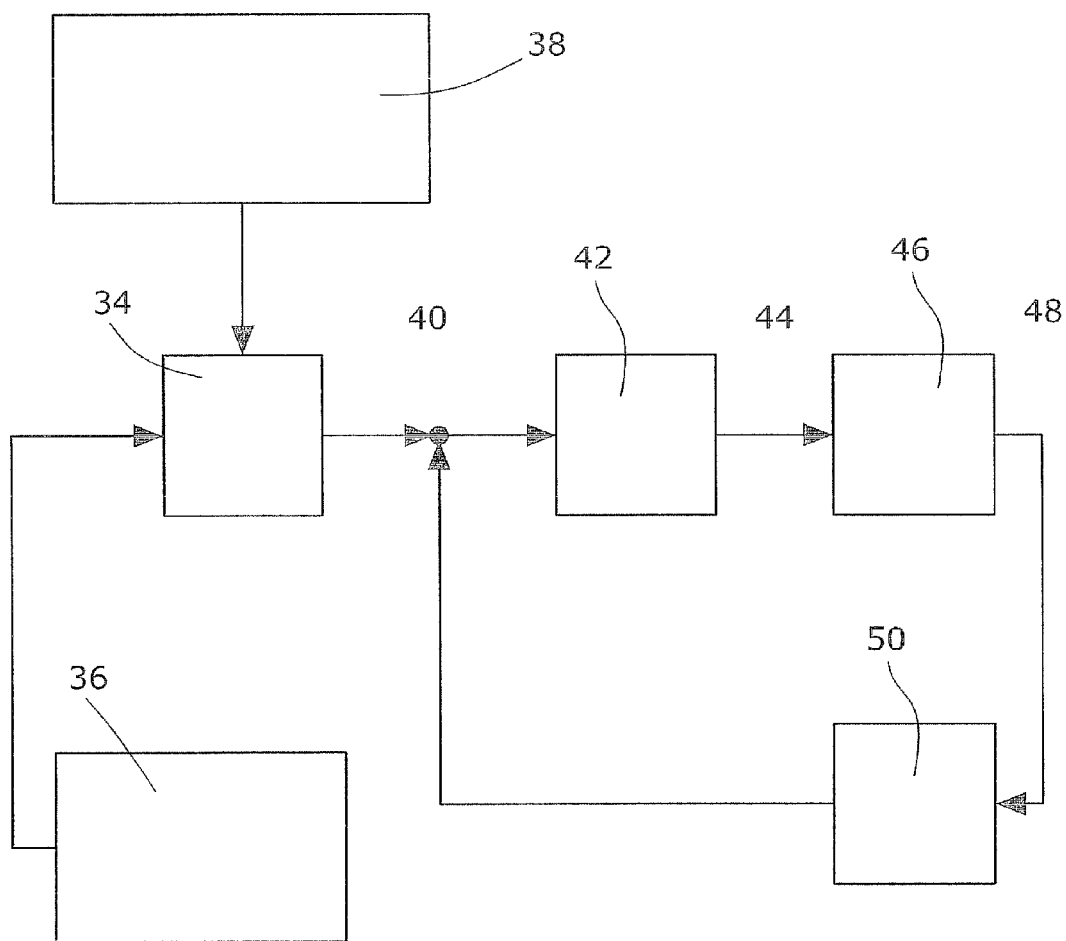


Fig.9

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**MILLING MACHINE, IN PARTICULAR
SURFACE MINER, AND METHOD FOR
MINING MILLED MATERIAL OF AN OPEN
CAST SURFACE**

The invention relates to a method for milling a ground surface, as well as to a milling machine.

In mining, earthwork and rock operations, the mining of solid earth materials in the form of milled material offers a great advantage over drilling and blasting as it can be performed with much greater economic efficiency.

The milling machine, generally called a surface miner, is able to crush the mined material to such a small size that it can be processed without any or requiring only minor subsequent treatment. The material removed by a milling drum is loaded, via loading conveyors, onto a truck that travels along next to the milling machine. In the process, the milled material is cut, crushed and finally loaded.

A known method provides that the ground surface of an opencast mining surface is milled along a predetermined milling track having a predetermined length. In the process, the milling operation is optimized, in terms of milling depth and milling speed, in accordance with the machine's power and the type of material to be milled.

The milled material is transported via a conveying device to at least one container of a truck that travels along next to the milling machine, said truck having a predetermined maximum loading volume per load. Once the truck is fully loaded, it is replaced with an unloaded truck.

At the end of the milling track, the milling machine turns so that an adjoining milling track can be removed. It is of disadvantage in this process that the truck may not be fully loaded at the end of the milling track so that the vehicle either needs to transport the milled material away being only partially loaded, or else needs to wait for the turning manoeuvre to be completed, in which case the working process will have to be interrupted once again during the next truck change until changing of the trucks has been completed. In order to minimize the breaks in operation, it is also known to use truck and trailer combinations that are provided with one or several trailers. With such truck and trailer combinations, there is the problem all the more, however, of the truck and trailer combination not being fully loaded at the end of the milling track. As such a truck is not able to perform a turning manoeuvre, there is the problem all the more in this arrangement of it not being possible to fully load the truck and trailer combination.

A further problem lies in loading the container of a truck evenly in order to be able to make maximum use of the container volume.

It is therefore the object of the present invention to specify a method for milling an opencast mining surface that can be performed with greater economic efficiency.

To this end, the following is provided in accordance with the method according to the present invention:

- calculation of the maximum total loading volume resulting over the length of the current milling track as a function of the current effective working width and a milling depth that has been optimized in relation to a predetermined, preferably maximum milling power,
- calculation of the number of truck loads required for the maximum total loading volume of a milling track,
- determination of an effective total loading volume of the current milling track, which results from the volume of the nearest whole number of loads, and

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adjustment of the adjustable total milling volume of the milling machine over the length of the milling track to match the effective total loading volume that results in a whole number of loads.

The invention enables the milling operation to be optimized in such a manner that, at the end of a current milling track, the container of a truck is, or containers of a truck are, also completely filled so that journeys of the trucks or truck and trailer combinations with containers not fully loaded are avoided, thus also minimizing the number of breaks in operation for the purpose of changing the trucks.

At the same time, the advance speed may be increased, for example, when working at a reduced milling depth so that the time required for milling off a milling track can be reduced.

It is preferably provided that the adjustable total milling volume of the milling machine in a milling track is adjusted to match a total loading volume which results from the volume of the nearest lower whole number of loads.

In this case, adjustment of the total milling volume to match the specified effective total loading volume is preferably effected by altering the milling depth. The reason for this is that, by reducing the milling depth, the total milling volume within a milling track can be reduced in such a fashion that it corresponds to the specified effective total loading volume that enables a whole number of loads to be achieved in a milling track.

An alternative possibility consists in adjusting the total milling volume to match the specified effective total loading volume by altering the effective working width by selecting a different overlap of adjoining milling tracks.

In this case, the milling depth optimized for the milling process is maintained, and the reduction of the total milling volume for adjustment to the total loading volume is adjusted by partly travelling over the previous milling track.

It is provided in this arrangement that the advance speed of the milling machine is adjusted to match the effective total milling volume in such a fashion that a preselected milling power, preferably maximum milling power, is maintained or achieved.

In order to improve the effectiveness of the milling process and the even loading of the container, it may also be provided that the travel speed of the truck is controlled, as a function of the advance speed of the milling machine, in such a fashion that the loading space of the at least one container is loaded evenly and fully over the length up to the maximum loading volume.

This is preferably effected by regulating the loading process by means of controlling the travel speed of the truck as a function of the advance speed of the milling machine and of the measured loading condition of a container.

The travel speed or the current position of the truck may alternatively be controlled as a function of the advance speed of the milling machine, or of the distance travelled by the milling machine in the current milling track, or of the current discharge position of the transport device.

It may further be provided that the travel speed or the current position of the truck is controlled in such a fashion that the discharge position of the conveying device above the at least one container moves from a front or rear end position inside the container to an end position that is opposite in longitudinal direction.

The travel speed of the truck is preferably controlled in such a fashion that the travel speed of the truck is higher than or equal to the advance speed of the milling machine.

It may alternatively be provided that the travel speed of the truck is controlled in such a fashion that the travel speed shows a constant positive difference to the advance speed of the milling machine.

It may alternatively be provided that the travel speed of the truck is controlled in such a fashion that the travel speed of the truck is altered in a discontinuous fashion.

At the beginning of the loading process, it may be provided that controlling the travel speed of the truck at a higher travel speed than the advance speed of the milling machine begins only after a sufficiently high initial fill has been discharged at the front or rear end position.

The method can be applied to advantage in particular when truck and trailer combinations with several trailers connected to one another in an articulated fashion are used.

In order to enable a continuous loading process, it is particularly advantageous in this arrangement if containers on several trailers connected to one another in an articulated fashion are used in which the upper end edges of the opposite end walls of adjacent containers overlap.

Containers may be used in this arrangement, the opposite end walls of which are provided with a mutually adapted curvature about an axis orthogonal to the ground surface in such a fashion that the opposite end walls have a smallest possible mutual distance but enable a mutual turning movement of the trailers both laterally and in a ramp transition area nonetheless.

Containers may also be used, the front end wall side of which is curved in a convex manner and is provided, preferably at the front end edge, with a projecting collar that covers a driver's cabin of the truck and/or the rear upper concavely curved end edge of the end wall of a container travelling ahead.

In the following, one embodiment of the invention is explained in greater detail with reference to the drawings.

FIG. 1 a graphic representation of a so-called opencast pit of an opencast mining surface,

FIG. 2 loading of a container of a truck via a transport conveyor of the milling machine,

FIG. 3 a side view of a surface miner,

FIG. 4 a top view of a surface miner,

FIG. 5 a complete cross-section of a pit in the working direction of the milling machine,

FIG. 6 a complete cross-section of a pit transverse to the working direction,

FIG. 7 definition of the actual cutting depth,

FIG. 8 material heaps with realistic and idealized loading, and

FIG. 9 a basic structure of a truck control unit.

FIG. 1 shows an opencast pit of an opencast mining surface, wherein the reference symbol 4 shows the ground surface to be processed, the area 6 shows a ramp which leads to an elevated turning area 8 in the respective periphery of the opencast pit. The surface miner 3 can turn in said turning area 8 after a milling track has been removed in order to process an adjoining milling track in the opposite direction.

An opencast pit has a size of, for example, approx. 100 m in width and approx. 500 m in length.

As can be seen from FIG. 2, the milled material removed by the surface miner 3, such as ore or coal, is loaded via a transport conveyor 2 onto a truck 1 that may also be provided with one or several containers 10. A container is located on the truck 1, said container having a loading volume of, for instance, 100 t. Truck and trailer combinations with a total number of three containers of 100 t each mounted on trailers are frequently used, so that the total loading capacity of such a truck load amounts to approx. 300 t. When a truck with a

100-t container is used, changing of the trucks needs to be performed approx. 16 to 17 times over the length of a milling track of approx. 500 m. This means that a short break in operation during changing of the trucks is required after every 30 m already, as the transport conveyor needs to be stopped and, due to the high milling power of the milling machine, the milling process thus also needs to be interrupted briefly during changing of the vehicles.

FIG. 2 shows a surface miner 3 that is provided with a control unit 12 for controlling the removal process during the mining of milled material of an opencast mining surface or during the milling off of layers of an asphalt or concrete traffic surface, and for controlling the transporting away of the removed milled material for loading onto a truck.

The ground surface is removed along a predetermined milling track having a predetermined length.

The milled material is conveyed via a conveying device, for instance, a transport conveyor 2, to at least one container of a truck 1 that travels along next to the milling machine, said truck 1 having a predetermined maximum loading volume per load.

A fully loaded truck is replaced with an unloaded truck when the maximum loading volume of a truck load has been reached.

The control unit 12 of the milling machine 3 calculates the maximum total loading volume resulting over the length of the current milling track as a function of the current effective working width and a milling depth that has been optimized in relation to a predetermined, preferably maximum milling power, the number of truck loads required for the maximum total loading volume of a milling track, and determines an effective total loading volume of the current milling track, which results from the nearest whole number of loads.

The control unit 12 then adjusts the adjustable total milling volume of the milling machine over the length of the milling track to match the effective total loading volume that results in a whole number of loads.

For the purpose of setting and adjusting the total milling volume, the control unit 12 can calculate the effective total loading volume which results from the nearest lower whole number of loads.

For the purpose of adjusting the adjustable total milling volume to match the specified effective total loading volume, the control unit 12 can alter, preferably reduce, the milling depth.

For the purpose of adjusting the adjustable total milling volume to match the specified effective total loading volume, the control unit 12 can alternatively alter the effective working width by selecting a different overlap of adjoining milling tracks.

The control unit 12 can set the advance speed of the milling machine to a preselected milling power, preferably maximum milling power.

In addition, the control unit 12 can control the travel speed of the truck as a function of the advance speed of the milling machine in such a fashion that the loading space of the at least one container is loaded evenly and fully over the length up to the maximum loading volume.

The control unit 12 can regulate the loading process of at least one container by controlling the travel speed of the truck as a function of the advance speed of the milling machine and of the measured loading condition of the container.

The control unit 12 can control the travel speed or the current position of the truck as a function of the advance speed of the milling machine, or of the distance travelled by

the milling machine in the current milling track, or of the current discharge position of the transport device in relation to the truck.

In this arrangement, the control unit **12** can control the travel speed or the current position of the truck in such a fashion that the discharge position of the conveying device above the at least one container moves from a front or rear end position inside the container to an end position that is opposite in longitudinal direction.

Preferably, the control unit can control the travel speed of the truck in such a fashion that the travel speed of the truck is higher than or equal to the advance speed of the milling machine.

The control unit **12** can increase the travel speed of the truck only after a sufficiently high initial fill has been reached at the front or rear end position.

The containers may be arranged on several trailers connected to one another in an articulated fashion, in which case the adjacent upper end edges of the opposite end walls overlap.

The adjacent end walls of the containers on the several trailers connected to one another in an articulated fashion may be provided with a mutually adapted curvature about an axis orthogonal to the ground surface in such a fashion that the end walls have a smallest possible mutual distance but enable a lateral turning movement of the trailers nonetheless.

The containers may be curved in a convex manner at the front end wall side and be provided, preferably at the front end edge, with a projecting collar that covers a driver's cabin of the truck and/or the rear upper concavely curved end edge of the end wall of a container travelling ahead.

A dimensioning and control concept for automated opencast mining is described in the following. The procedure comprises the following steps:

- calculation/dimensioning of the cutting depth for each layer (as a function of a "vertical" opencast mining process, assuming that the pit dimensions are known) to achieve optimal truck loading for each layer,
- application of a control concept for the opencast mining/loading process to achieve optimal truck loading at minimized control and communication efforts.

The fundamental advantage of the following control concept lies in the fact that a continuous loading process between truck and opencast milling machine, where both machines travel at a constant speed, is especially easy to realize with regard to the control concept and requires almost no communication between the milling machine and the truck (except at the beginning and at the end of the loading process).

The principle of the present invention consists in controlling the truck speed and direction as a function of the actual position and speed of the milling machine (or of the position and speed of the conveyor belt of the milling machine respectively), the cutting depth and cutting width of the milling machine and other process parameters known in advance, such as the maximum payload of the truck, the equivalent loading length of the truck and the density of the milled material.

Calculation of the optimal cutting depth as a function of the vertically progressing layer mining process:

General Definitions and Relations:

Known process parameters and variables:

$l_{min\ e, max}$ in [m]: maximum total horizontal distance to be mined without the milling machine turning back (including the ramp and the flat part; see FIG. 5)

α_{ramp} in [m]: mining ramp angle; see FIG. 5

ρ_{mat} in [t/m³]: density of the mined material

M_{pay} in [t]: payload of the truck

L in [-]: loosening factor, relation between the density of the cut material and the density of the loaded material

$F_{T, max}$ in [m]: maximum cutting depth

F_B in [m]: cutting width

$F_{T, act}$ in [m]: actual cutting depth

Unknown process variables to be determined (in the sequence of clarification):

$l_{min\ e, act}$ in [m]: actual total horizontal distance to be mined without the milling machine turning back (including the ramp and the flat part; see FIG. 5)

$l_{ramp, act}$ in [m]: actual horizontal distance to be mined while the milling machine is on the ramp; see FIG. 7

$l_{flat, act}$ in [m]: actual horizontal distance to be mined while the milling machine is on the flat part of the pit cross-section; see FIG. 7

$Q_{ramp, act}$ in [m³]: material volume to be loaded on the ramp

$Q_{flat, act}$ in [m³]: material volume to be loaded on the flat part of the mining track

$Q_{total, act}$ in [m³]: total material volume to be loaded in a single track

$M_{total, act}$ in [t]: total weight to be loaded in a single track

n_{trucks} in [-]: number of trucks required for the total load of a single track.

FIG. 1 shows a top view of the sample of a pit, and FIGS. 5 and 6 show the relevant cross-sections. A complete pit cross-section in the working direction of the milling machine is depicted in FIG. 5. In FIG. 5, **16** depicts the maximum pit length, **18** depicts the maximum mining length, **21** depicts the maximum mining depth, and **20** depicts the mining ramp, said mining ramp having a slope of, for instance, 1:10–5.71°. The complete pit cross-section transverse to the working direction is depicted in FIG. 6. In FIG. 6, **22** depicts the maximum mining depth, and **24** depicts the mining ramp, said mining ramp having a slope of, for instance, 1:0.25–76°. Let it be assumed that the total pit dimensions as well as the cross-section are known prior to the start of the mining process. Determination of the dimensions is typically performed prior to the start of the mining process by means of an extensive analysis of drilling samples.

Calculation procedure:

Start at the top of the pit by adjusting $l_{min\ e, act}$ to the beginning of the track length and by adjusting the cutting depth to the maximum cutting depth

Calculate the number of trucks required by means of the cited procedure

Reduce the number of trucks required to the next smaller whole number

Recalculate the cutting depth and the actual horizontal distance on the flat part $l_{flat, act}$

Set $l_{flat, act}$ as the starting value for $l_{min\ e, act}$ to calculate the next cutting depth

The material volume that needs to be loaded on a ramp can be calculated from

$$Q_{ramp, act} = \frac{1}{2} \cdot l_{ramp, act} \cdot F_{T, act} \cdot F_B \cdot L.$$

In a similar fashion, the material volume that needs to be loaded on the flat part can be derived from

$$Q_{flat, act} = l_{flat, act} \cdot F_{T, act} \cdot F_B \cdot L.$$

The total material that needs to be loaded for the entire track is simply

$$Q_{total, act} = Q_{flat, act} + 2 \cdot Q_{ramp, act}$$

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Substituting the material volume of the ramp and the flat part results in

$$Q_{total,act} = l_{flat,act} \cdot F_{T,act} \cdot F_B \cdot L + 2 \cdot \frac{1}{2} \cdot l_{ramp,act} \cdot F_{T,act} \cdot F_B \cdot L$$

which can be further simplified to

$$Q_{total,act} = \frac{(l_{flat,act} + l_{ramp,act})}{l_{min e,act}} \cdot F_{T,act} \cdot F_B \cdot L$$

The total weight to be loaded is

$$M_{total,act} = Q_{total,act} \cdot \rho_{mat}$$

The number of truck loads required for the total load is

$$n_{trucks} = M_{total,act} / M_{pay}$$

A recalculation of the required cutting depth can now be performed quite easily by solving the aforementioned equations for the cutting depth, which results in

$$F_{T,act} = \frac{Q_{total,act}}{F_B \cdot L \cdot l_{min e,act}}$$

The current total horizontal distance of the flat part can be determined by initially calculating the distance of the ramp

$$l_{ramp,act} = \frac{F_{T,act}}{\tan(\alpha_{ramp})}$$

The remaining distance of the flat part $l_{flat,act}$ can then be calculated from (FIG. 7)

$$l_{flat,act} = l_{min e,act} - 2 \cdot l_{ramp,act}$$

The total horizontal distance $l_{min e,act}$ for calculation of the next layer equals the last calculated distance of the flat part

$$l_{min e,act} = l_{flat,act}$$

with the exception of the first calculation, where said length needs to be set to the maximum initial horizontal distance $l_{min e, max}$.

FIG. 8 shows material heaps 26 with realistic and idealized loading 28, 30, with 32 depicting the loading length.

Control law for the truck speed:

General definitions and relations:

Known process parameters and variables:

F_T in [m]: cutting depth

F_B in [m]: cutting width

v_{SM} in [m/min]: advance speed of the milling machine

M_{pay} in [t]: payload of the truck

L in [-]: loosening factor, relation between the density of the cut material and the density of the loaded material

ρ_{mat} in [t/m³]: density of the mined material

l_c in [m]: equivalent loading length of the truck

Unknown process variables to be determined (in the sequence of clarification):

t_{lc} in [min]: truck loading time

Q_{lc} in [m³]: material volume for one loading cycle

\dot{q} in [m³/min]: material flow rate from the milling machine

$A_{tray,cr}$ in [m²]: loadable cross-sectional area of the truck tray

v_{Truck} in [m/min]: truck speed in forward direction

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Where: [min]: minutes [m]: metres [m³/min]: cubic metres per minute

The truck-loading cross-sectional area as a function of the surface milling machine speed, the cutting depth, the cutting width and the truck speed can be calculated by using the following simple assumptions and relations:

The material can be loaded onto the truck without any angle of repose (see FIG. 8 for illustration).

The truck 1 and the milling machine 3 travel at a constant speed.

The truck 1 starts loading at the front end of the truck tray and travels faster than the milling machine.

There is no storage of material in the milling machine 3.

A constant loosening of the cut material takes place, i.e. the material delivered by the conveying device equals the cut material, multiplied by the loosening factor.

The material delivered by the milling machine 3 during a specific loading time t_i can be calculated from

$$Q_{lc} = F_T \cdot F_B \cdot v_{SM} \cdot L \cdot t_{lc} = \dot{q} \cdot t_{lc}$$

The resulting cross-sectional loading area of the truck tray can be calculated from

$$A_{tray,cr} = Q_{lc} / l_c$$

where l_c represents an equivalent loading length assuming that the load deposited on the truck resembles a cuboid.

By substituting the material volume and the loading length one obtains

$$A_{tray,cr} = F_T \cdot F_B \cdot L \cdot \frac{v_{SM}}{v_{Truck} - v_{SM}}, \quad (1)$$

which means that for a given cutting depth, a given cutting width and a given loosening factor the cross-sectional loading area is a function of the milling machine speed and the difference of milling machine speed and truck speed. This relation can be verified quite easily. Assuming that the truck is stationary ($v_{truck}=0$), it results from the aforementioned relation that

$$A_{tray,cr} = F_T \cdot F_B \cdot L,$$

which means that the material cross-section to be cut by the milling machine, multiplied by the loosening factor, needs to be stored in the truck 1.

To be able to obtain a particular cross-sectional loading area of the truck tray, equation (1) produces a control law for adjusting the truck speed and/or the milling machine speed for a given cutting depth and cutting width. In practice, the loading area is subject to a limitation that is due to the maximum payload of the truck tray. With a given maximum payload of the truck tray, the maximum material volume that can be loaded during one loading cycle is defined by

$$Q_{lc,max} = M_{pay} \cdot \rho_{mat}$$

The maximum material volume can then be translated into a maximum cross-sectional loading area

$$A_{tray,cr,max} = Q_{lc,max} / l_c \quad (2).$$

Inserting (2) into (1) and solving (1) for the truck speed produces a feedforward control law for the truck speed:

$$v_{Truck} = v_{SM} \left(1 + \frac{F_T \cdot F_B \cdot L \cdot \rho_{mat} \cdot l_c}{M_{Pay}} \right).$$

The basic structure of a truck control unit is depicted in FIG. 9. The truck position and speed feedforward control unit 34 includes a feedforward control rule for the truck speed and for mapping the conveyor position onto the truck position. The truck position and speed feedforward control unit 34 includes measuring values 36, such as absolute conveyor positions and speeds, actual cutting depth and actual milling machine speed. Additional parameters 38 exist, such as the maximum payload of the truck, the loosening factor, the material density, the equivalent loading length of the truck tray, or the cutting width. 40 depicts the commanded speeds and positions (direction and amplitude), 42 depicts the truck control device, 44 depicts the control commands, speed commands, 46 depicts the truck, 48 depicts the absolute truck position, and 50 depicts the ATS/GPS.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of milling a ground surface comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position as a function of an advance speed of the milling machine.

2. A method of milling a ground surface, comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position as a function of a distance travelled by the milling machine in a current milling track.

3. A method of milling a ground surface comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position as a function of a fill level of the container.

4. A method of milling a ground surface, comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position as a function of position and speed of a conveyor belt of the conveying device.

5. A method of milling a ground surface comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position as a function of a cutting depth of the milling machine.

6. A method of milling a ground surface, comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position as a function of a maximum payload of the truck.

7. A method of milling a ground surface comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position as a function of an equivalent loading length of the truck.

8. A method of milling a ground surface, comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position by controlling a travel speed of the truck.

9. A method of milling a ground surface comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

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wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position by controlling a current position of the truck.

10. A method of milling a ground surface, comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position such that a discharge position of the conveying device moves from a front or rear end position inside the container to an end position that is opposite in longitudinal direction.

11. A method of milling a ground surface comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position such that a travel speed of the truck is higher than or equal to an advance speed of the milling machine.

12. A method of milling a ground surface, comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position such that a travel speed of the truck has a constant positive difference from an advance speed of the milling machine.

13. A method of milling a ground surface comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position such that a travel speed of the truck is altered discontinuously.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein: A method of milling a ground surface, comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and

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(c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position so as to load the container evenly.

15. The method of claim 14, wherein:

step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position as a function of a current discharge position of the conveying device.

16. The method of claim 14, further comprising:

interrupting steps (a), (b) and (c) when a maximum loading volume of the truck has been reached;

replacing the fully loaded truck with an unloaded truck; and

repeating steps (a), (b) and (c) with the unloaded truck.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein:

step (c) further comprises mapping a conveyor device position onto a truck position.

18. The method of claim 14, wherein:

step (c) further comprises measuring an absolute conveyor device position and an absolute truck position.

19. The method of claim 14, wherein:

step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position by generating a command speed and direction for the truck.

20. A method of milling a ground surface comprising:

- (a) milling the ground surface along a milling track with a milling machine;
- (b) loading a container of a truck that travels adjacent to the milling machine by transporting milled material via a conveying device of the milling machine to the container; and
- (c) regulating the loading of step (b) by automatically controlling a relative position between the container and the conveying device;

wherein step (c) further comprises automatically controlling the relative position such that the container is loaded evenly and fully over a length of the container up to a maximum loading volume of the container.

21. A method for milling a ground surface with a milling machine removing the ground surface,

by milling the ground surface along a milling track having a length,

by transporting the milled material via a conveying device to a container of a truck that travels along next to the milling machine, said truck having a maximum loading capacity per load, and

by replacing a fully loaded truck with an unloaded truck when the maximum loading capacity of a load has been reached, characterized by

controlling a relative position between the conveying device and the container with an automatic controller such that a loading space of the container is loaded evenly and fully over a length of the loading space up to the maximum loading capacity.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the controlling step further comprises controlling the relative position as a function of a measured loading condition of the container.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein the controlling step further comprises controlling the relative position as a function of a distance travelled by the milling machine in the milling track.

24. The method of claim 21, wherein the controlling step further comprises controlling the relative position as a function of a current discharge position of the conveying device.

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25. The method of claim 21, wherein the controlling step further comprises controlling the relative position such that a discharge position of the conveying device above the container moves from a front or rear end position inside the container to an end position that is opposite in longitudinal direction.

26. The method of claim 21, wherein the controlling step further comprises controlling a travel speed of the truck such that the travel speed of the truck is higher than or equal to an advance speed of the milling machine.

27. The method of claim 21, wherein the controlling step further comprises controlling a travel speed of the truck such that the travel speed of the truck maintains a constant positive difference to an advance speed of the milling machine.

28. The method of claim 21, wherein the controlling step further comprises controlling a travel speed of the truck such that the travel speed of the truck is altered discontinuously.

29. The method of claim 21, wherein the controlling step further comprises controlling a travel speed of the truck at a higher travel speed than an advance speed of the milling machine after a predetermined initial fill level has been discharged at a front or rear end position of the container.

30. A milling machine, with a control unit configured to control a removal process during the milling of milled material of a ground surface, and configured to control a transporting away of the removed milled material for loading onto a truck, wherein the milling machine

removes the ground surface along a milling track having a length,

conveys the milled material via a conveying device to a container of a truck that travels along next to the milling machine, said truck having a maximum loading capacity per load, and wherein

a fully loaded truck is replaced with an unloaded truck when the maximum loading capacity of a truck load has been reached, characterized in that:

the control unit is configured to control a relative position between the container and the conveying device such

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that a loading space of the container is loaded evenly and fully over a length of the container up to the maximum loading capacity.

31. The milling machine of claim 30, wherein the control unit is configured to control the relative position as a function of an advance speed of the milling machine.

32. The milling machine of claim 30, wherein the control unit is configured to control the relative position as a function of a measured loading condition of the container.

33. The milling machine of claim 30, wherein the control unit is configured to control the relative position as a function of a distance travelled by the milling machine in the milling track.

34. The milling machine of claim 30, wherein the control unit is configured to control the relative position as a function of a current discharge position of the conveying device in relation to the truck.

35. The milling machine of claim 30, wherein the control unit is configured to control a travel speed of the truck such that a discharge position of the conveying device above the container moves from a front or rear end position inside the container to an end position that is opposite in longitudinal direction.

36. The milling machine of claim 30, wherein the control unit is configured to control a travel speed of the truck such that the travel speed of the truck is higher than or equal to an advance speed of the milling machine.

37. The milling machine of claim 30, wherein the control unit is configured to control a travel speed of the truck such that the travel speed of the truck maintains a constant positive difference to an advance speed of the milling machine.

38. The milling machine of claim 30, wherein the control unit is configured to control a travel speed of the truck such that the travel speed of the truck is altered discontinuously.

39. The milling machine of claim 30, wherein the control unit is configured to control a travel speed of the truck such that the travel speed of the truck is increased after a predetermined initial fill level has been reached at a front or rear end position of the container.

* * * * *

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

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INVENTOR(S) : Winfried von Schönebeck et al.

Page 1 of 1

It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

IN THE CLAIMS

In column 11, line 60, delete “The method of claim 1, wherein:” before --A method of milling a ground surface, comprising:--

Signed and Sealed this
Sixteenth Day of February, 2016

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michelle K. Lee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Michelle K. Lee
Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office